

Memoirs of Himself.

imagination, that I could recognize not only the features, but even the momentary expressions, of their countenances, and the tones of their voices.

According to different states of the mind, too, retrospect appears longer or shorter. It may happen that some memorable circumstance of very early life shall be so powerfully recalled, as to contract the wide intervening space, by banishing from the view, a little while, all the series of intermediate remembrances ; but when this one object of memory retires again to its remoteness and indifference, and all the others resume their proper places and distances, the retrospect appears long.

Places and things which have an association with any of the events or feelings of past life, will greatly assist the recollection of them. A man of strong associations finds memorials of himself already traced on the places where he has conversed with happiness or misery. If an old man wished to animate for a moment the languid and faded ideas which he retains of his youth, he might walk with his crutch across the green, where he once played with companions who are now laid to repose probably in another green spot not far off. An aged saint may meet again some of the affecting ideas of his early piety, in the place where he first found it happy to pray. A walk in a meadow, the sight of a bank of flowers, perhaps even of some one flower, a landscape with the tints of autumn, the descent into a valley, the brow of a mountain, the house where a friend has been met, or has resided, or has died, have often produced a much more lively recollection of our past feelings, and of the objects and events which caused them, than the most perfect description could have done; and we have lingered a considerable time for the pensive luxury of thus resuming the long-departed state.

But there are many to whom local associations present images which they fervently wish they could exorcise; images which haunt the places where crimes had been perpetrated, •/• and which seem to approach and glare on the criminal as he hastily passes by, especially if in the evening or the night. No local associations are so impressive as those of guilt. It may here be observed that as each one has his own separate remembrances, giving to some places an aspect and a significance which he alone can perceive, there must be an unknown number of pleasing, or mournful, or dreadful associations,